

December 11, 2009

WASHINGTON, DC - Today, U.S. Rep. Michael Arcuri (NY-24) announced that he, along with several Upstate New York colleagues in Congress, has secured \$4,595,000 that will set the stage for High Speed Rail service across Upstate New York. The funding will be used to enhance safety and signaling devices along the track in order to reduce travel times, improve reliability and work to enable high speed rail travel.

"High speed rail is key to rebuilding Upstate New York in the 21st Century economy," **Arcuri said**

"This funding is the first step in the process to making Upstate a model for the rest of the country in rail travel both for commercial activity and tourism. I look forward to working with my colleagues in Congress as well as the great coalition of partners from the MDA and local Chambers of Commerce to make high speed rail a reality in Upstate New York."

"The Economic Impact study that was done across the Empire Corridor shows that if this High Speed Rail corridor is built there will be a significant positive impact across the Upstate New York region and specifically the Utica-Rome MSA," **Mohawk Valley Chamber of Commerce President Frank Elias said.**

"The Greater Utica area can benefit tremendously since there is currently not a commercial airport within this metropolitan area which extends to the major metro areas such as New York City, Boston, or Toronto. High Speed Rail creates the connectivity between the upstate New York Cities and these major metro markets. In addition, Utica is blessed with a magnificent train station which can be a hub for travel into the Adirondack region via the Adirondack Railroad."

"These funds mark the first big step on New York's path towards high speed rail," **Syracuse Chamber of Commerce President Darlene Kerr said.**

"We commend Congressman Arcuri and our other Upstate representatives for their leadership and foresight in helping to ensure the Empire Corridor is truly ready for the major infrastructure investment that comes for high speed rail."

This funding will set the stage for the creation of a high-speed rail line between Buffalo and Albany with stops in Rochester, Syracuse, and Utica. The funds will be used to improve grade crossing safety and to facilitate high-speed rail along the Empire West Corridor. Work will include reconfiguration to enhance safety, including improvements to existing warning devices and the installation of channelization devices. These projects will enable improved speeds throughout the corridor, thereby reducing travel times and increasing on-time service. Of these funds, \$1 million are specifically for improvements at crossings in Oneida County.

Arcuri jointly requested these projects with other members of the bipartisan Upstate Caucus, including U.S. Rep. Louise Slaughter (NY-28), U.S. Rep. Christopher Lee (NY-26), U.S. Rep. Dan Maffei (NY-25), and U.S. Rep. Paul Tonko (NY-21).

This funding is included in the Fiscal Year 2010 Consolidated Appropriations Act, which passed the House of Representatives today by a vote of 221-202. The measure now goes to the Senate for approval.

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